



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University College of Dublin
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1 2019
Otago degree(s)	LLB & BA
Major(s)	Politics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Exploring Ireland	English	Arts any level (I think)	
Ireland Uncovered	English	Arts any level (I think)	
International Political Economy	English	POLS 300 level	
Gender, War and Peace	English	POLS 300 level	
Sports Law	English	LAWS 400 level	
Employment Law	English	LAWS 400 level	

Any comments about these papers?

These worked out to be the equivalent of four Otago papers. I really enjoyed my papers – the Irish ones were great for learning a little more about the history and culture.

How did the academic experience/ workload/ style of teaching differ from Otago?

It was fairly similar to Otago. You only need a 40% to 'pass' so taking six papers didn't feel any harder than taking four in Dunedin.

Accommodation

What accommodation did you stay in? What were the pros and cons of your accommodation?

I stayed on campus and I absolutely loved it. It seemed expensive when paying the entire cost up front at the start but I don't think it would've been any cheaper to flat – Dublin is pricey. It was also so good in terms of settling into life in Dublin and meeting people. I would 100% recommend.

There is no real difference between halls so I would go for whatever is cheapest – it's not like halls in Dunedin in that sense. I was in Merville and loved it. I had friends in Belgrove (the other cheap hall) and it was good too, but Merville is closer to the bus stop etc. That would be the only real difference.

Money matters

Please detail your basic costs, e.g. accommodation, flights, visa, food, insurance

Flights were about \$1,500 return with flexible dates if needed. Accommodation was about the same as a semester in a hall in Dunedin – but because we are overseas students we have to pay up front so be prepared for that. Eating out is about the same as in New Zealand, it's all about finding the right places to go. Same with supermarkets. Insurance was about \$500, shop around though you might be able to get a better deal.

What means did you use to access your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, Cash passport, foreign bank account, etc.)

Get a cash passport – I got one through Westpac but there are plenty options out there. Just shop around. It's also good to have a back up credit or debit card too. Ireland/Europe uses cash a lot more than we do so it's always good to have some cash on you – taxis don't accept card.

Visas & Insurance

Did you have to apply for a visa? What was the process?

You have to register with Irish Immigration and they will give you a student card to make it easier getting in and out of the country. Appointments are hard to get but once you get one it's fairly easy, it costs 300euro. Although someone mentioned to me that the laws have changed since I had my appointment so maybe look into that.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes you must have comprehensive insurance to study at the university.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

What organised activities were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

The first couple of weeks they had a bunch of different trips planned that you could pay to go on. We did our own and it was super fun too. But they would've been cool to meet people etc.

What was the university/ city like?

I love Dublin. I miss it already, it's such a fun city to live in. It's not actually that big either so it's fairly easy to get around via bus. I would recommend Dublin to everyone. The campus is huge and beautiful and the city is full of life (and Guinness).

Any recommendations for things to do, places to visit, places to eat etc.?

Temple Bar definitely, it is super touristy but you've gotta do it. The city centre is beautiful, I would recommend exploring around the city and finding little pubs and things to do. Baggot Street is great for watching sports in pubs too.

Any tips for future students?

Make the most of it! Say yes to everything in the first few weeks and really put yourself out there, you'll meet some incredible people and have a really fun time! Also flights out of Ireland are SO cheap, it's through Ryanair which is about the equivalent to Jetstar but if you can get to Italy for \$50NZD return so it's worth it!

Overall Experience

Please write one paragraph (or more) about your exchange experience. Please include some photos!

I had the best time. I made the most amazing friends and saw parts of Ireland and Europe that I didn't think I would ever see. Dublin is about the same as living in Auckland but honestly it's so worth it. There were times when I was literally in Ireland for less than 48hrs before flying out to another country it was insane. But the time I spent in Ireland was incredible too, the people are so friendly and the culture is so much fun! I miss it already and I know I will definitely be back.

P.S. weather is similar to Dunedin

